

Neighborhood in the perception of the Warsaw middle school students

AIMS

- to examine the changes in the students perception of informal social control (i.e. neighbours' negative reaction on youth problem behaviours)
- the association between adolescent substance use (alcohol, nicotine, marihuana) and their perception of:
 - 1/ informal social control and
 - 2/ affluence and symptoms of physical and social problems in the neighbourhood.

METHOD

The self-report anonymous questionnaire completed during school lessons.

Initial sample included more than 3000 of adolescents who in the school year 2006/07 begun education in the Warsaw middle schools.

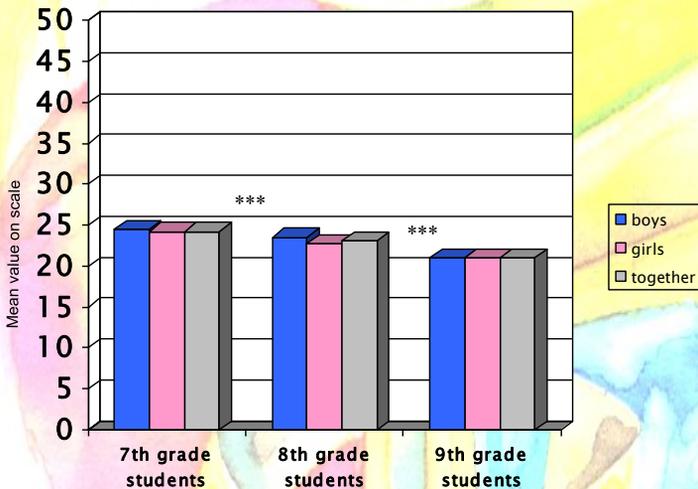
Classrooms were randomly selected from Warsaw public and non-public middle schools

Data reported here were derived from Wave 1 (7th grade) and Wave 2 (8th grade) and Wave 3 (9th grade).

The analyzed sample included 1855 adolescents who participated in all three waves which constitutes about 60% response rate from Wave 1.

RESULTS

Students' perception of informal social control



OR (95% CI) of substance use by socio-demographic and neighbourhood variables

| Explanatory variables and (reference category) | Cigarettes smoking in the past 30 days | Alcohol use at least 1-2 times in the past 30 days | Marihuana use at least 1-2 times in the past 12 months |
|---|--|--|--|
| | Odds ratio (confidence intervals) | | |
| Boys (girls) | 1.23 (0.95 - 1.59) | 0.87 (0.70 - 1.09) | 0.56 (0.39 - 0.79)*** |
| Single mother/father or extended family (both parent family) | 1.72 (1.28 - 2.31)*** | 1.44 (1.09 - 1.89)** | 2.12 (1.44 - 3.11)*** |
| Mean or high family income (low family income) | 1.36 (0.72 - 2.59) | 1.12 (0.65 - 1.91) | 1.07 (0.48 - 2.39) |
| University mother education (primary, vocational or secondary mother education) | 0.98 (0.76 - 1.26) | 0.92 (0.73 - 1.15) | 1.47 (1.02 - 2.13)* |
| High level of neighbourhood affluence (low level of neighbourhood affluence) | 0.76 (0.59 - 0.98)* | 0.66 (0.53 - 0.82)*** | 0.64 (0.45 - 0.91)** |
| High level of perceived informal social control (low level of perceived social control) | 0.61 (0.45 - 0.79)*** | 0.69 (0.55 - 0.86)*** | 0.36 (0.22 - 0.52)*** |

Most of Warsaw middle school students perceived their neighbourhoods as relatively affluent with little symptoms of physical and social problems.

Perceived social control decreases during middle school years.

Results of cross-sectional logistic regression conducted at Wave 3 data indicated that both of explanatory variables (perceived high level of social control and neighbourhood affluence)

were found as protective factor for all adolescent drug-related behaviours.

CONCLUSION

Neighborhood factors are important component of the complex model of adolescents substance use. Results suggests that focusing prevention efforts on informal neighbours control may be beneficial.

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